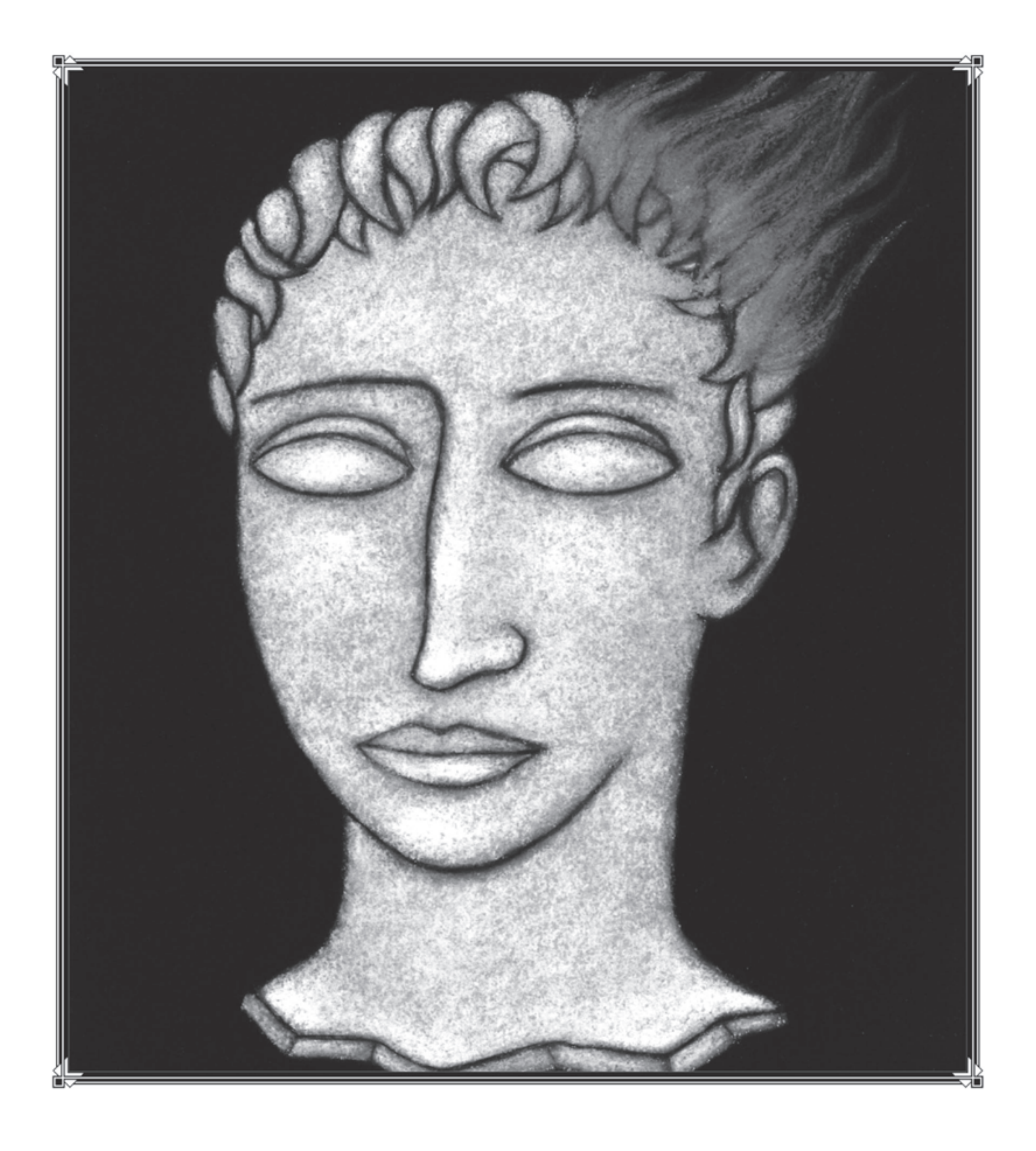
SHAKESPEARE
MADE EASY
Julius Caesar

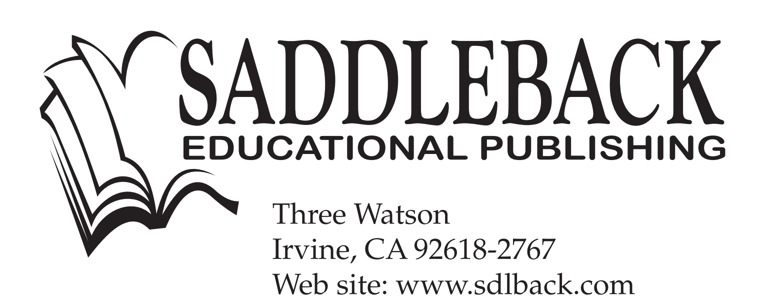


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SHAKESPEARE
MADE EASY
Julius Caesar



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Contents



To the Teacher

As any teacher or student who has read Shakespeare knows, his plays are not easy. They are thought-provoking and complex texts that abound with romance, deceit, tragedy, comedy, revenge, and humanity shown at its very worst as well as its very best. In short, to read Shakespeare is to explore the depths and heights of humanity.

The *Shakespeare Made Easy* Activity Guides are designed by teachers for teachers to help students navigate this journey. Each guide is broken into six sections of four activities and one review. At the end of each guide is a final test, a variety of culminating activities, and an answer key.

The activities are meant to aid textual comprehension, provide creative opportunities for the reader to make personal connections with the text, and help busy teachers gain quick access to classroom-tested and age-appropriate activities that make the teaching of Shakespeare an easier task.

Each regular activity, as well as each culminating activity, can be modified to be an individual or a group task, and the reviews and test can be used as quick comprehension checks or formally scored assessments. The guides may be used in conjunction with the Barron's *Shakespeare Made Easy* texts or alone. Ultimately, the *Shakespeare Made Easy* Activity Guides are intended to assist teachers and students in gaining an increased understanding of and appreciation for the reading of Shakespeare.



Introduction to the Play

Historical Background of *Julius Caesar*

Shakespeare adapted *Julius Caesar* from Plutarch's classic *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes*, which was translated and published in English in the late 1500s. The time frame within the play is one month, but the historical events portrayed actually happened over three years from 45 B.C.E. to 42 B.C.E. The Feast of Lupercal was on February 15, and Caesar was assassinated one month later on March 15. His death was followed by civil war between the supporters of Brutus and Cassius and the army controlled by the new Triumvirate—Antony, Lepidus, and Octavius. The aftermath of the assassination took three years. In fact, the death by suicide of Brutus and Cassius was two weeks apart.

In 61 B.C.E., Pompey was a strong and successful leader and general in Rome. To solidify his power, he formed an alliance with two other men: Marcus Crassus, the wealthiest Roman of his time, and young Julius Caesar. The three men, elected consuls, ruled as the First Triumvirate because of their combined wealth and leadership skills. However, Crassus took his army to fight a war with the Parthians and was defeated and killed. Caesar was more successful. He was expanding the Roman Empire in North Africa, Spain, France, and Egypt.

This centralization of power in the hands of Pompey and Caesar was a growing concern to the Senate. They feared what might happen to the liberty and freedom of Roman citizens if Julius Caesar or Pompey were to take total control of Rome. To reduce the influence of these two men, the Senate convinced Pompey to fight Caesar in a civil war, and they demanded that Caesar return from his foreign conquests alone, without any troops. Caesar returned, but he brought his armies with him for protection. This rebellious act resulted in civil war.

Because of Caesar's leadership and charisma, the people of Rome sided with him against Pompey, who had to escape to Greece to preserve his life. Caesar gave chase, and in 48 B.C.E. defeated Pompey's army. Pompey again retreated to Egypt, where he was killed by Ptolemy XII, King of Egypt. Caesar continued his conquests in and near Egypt. He returned to Rome a hero, triumphant over many other nations. In response, the Senate elected Caesar dictator for a ten-year term.

In 45 B.C.E., some of Pompey's sons in Spain threatened Caesar's leadership, so Caesar took his armies to Spain and defeated the Roman armies loyal to Pompey's sons. He returned to Rome the victor. This time, however, his victory was not over foreign countries but over fellow Romans. That is why the tribunes at the opening of the play are so upset with the plebeians on holiday. It is at this point in the history of Julius Caesar that the play begins.

The reader may wonder about the relationship between the Roman tribunes Brutus and Cassius with Julius Caesar, and why they

take the role of conspiracy leaders. Brutus descended from an important old Roman family. One of his ancestors had even assisted in the founding of Rome. During Pompey's rise to power, Brutus and Cassius were Pompey's allies. Then, when Julius Caesar marshaled his armies against Pompey, they turned against Caesar. The seeds of the conspiracy had been sown.

Synopsis of *Julius Caesar*

Act one, Scene 1

In Rome, Julius Caesar arrives after defeating his rival Pompey. The people of Rome are celebrating the victory by taking a holiday from work. Two Roman officials, Flavius and Marullus, are upset with Caesar's popularity.

Act one, Scene 2

Surrounded by his friends, Caesar parades through Rome. He is celebrating his victory over Pompey's sons and the Feast of Lupercal, a fertility rite. From the crowd, a soothsayer tells Caesar to "Beware the ides of March," which is March 15. Caesar does not pay attention to the warning.

Everyone leaves, but Brutus and Cassius stay on the street to talk about Caesar. Cassius tries to convince Brutus to join the conspiracy to kill Caesar. Soon, Caesar returns and notices Cassius and Brutus talking. He says to Mark Antony that he distrusts Cassius. Later, Casca reports to Cassius and Brutus that Caesar was offered a crown three times, but Caesar refused it reluctantly. They talk about Caesar's ambitions and weaknesses.

Act one, Scene 3

It is a dark and stormy night in Rome. Cicero and Casca comment on the weather as an ill omen. Cassius talks to Casca and Cinna about the conspiracy. They devise a plan to draw Brutus into the assassination plot.

Act two, Scene 1

Brutus cannot sleep. Convinced by Cassius' false letters, Brutus decides that killing Caesar is the only honorable action. The conspirators come to Brutus' home, and he joins their conspiracy to assassinate Caesar in the morning at the Capitol. Now a leader, Brutus convinces the group to let Mark Antony live even though he is a friend of Caesar.

After the nighttime visitors leave, Portia joins Brutus and asks him to let her in on his troubles. To prove she will keep his secrets, she shows him a wound she has given herself in the leg. Brutus promises to tell her what is happening to him.

Act two, Scene 2

Calpurnia, Caesar's wife, has had a disturbing dream and begs Caesar not to leave the house. He listens to her until Decius reinterprets the dream in a positive light. The other conspirators arrive with Mark Antony, and all the men leave for the Capitol.

Act two, Scenes 3 and 4

Artemidorus waits near the Capitol to give Caesar a paper warning him of the conspiracy. Meanwhile, Portia is upset and tries to find out information about Caesar and Brutus.

Act three, Scene 1

A soothsayer and Artemidorus try to warn Caesar on his way to the Capitol. However, Caesar does not pay attention to them. While giving a speech about his greatness, Caesar is stabbed to death.

The conspirators claim to all that their deed was just because Caesar was ambitious and dangerous. Mark Antony comes to the conspirators and asks if he can speak at Caesar's funeral.

Cassius does not trust Antony, but agrees to allow him to address the people at the funeral. After the conspirators leave, Mark Antony promises Caesar's dead body that he will pay back the conspirators for Caesar's death.

Act three, Scene 2

Brutus addresses the people at Caesar's funeral, giving many reasons why Caesar's assassination was necessary. Then Antony takes his turn at the pulpit. He shows them Caesar's body and reads to them the part of Caesar's will that indicates that each citizen will receive money and that Rome will have a public park. Because of Antony's speech, the people vow to kill the conspirators. Antony leaves the mob scene and joins with Octavius and Lepidus to form the Second Triumvirate.

Act three, Scene 3

Cinna, the poet, is killed by the mob because they think he is Cinna, the conspirator.

Act four, Scene 1

Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus, the three leaders who make up the Second Triumvirate, meet and plan their revenge. They realize this will end in a major battle.

Act four, Scene 2

At a military camp near Sardinia, Brutus notes that his friendship with Cassius has become more distant. Then Cassius arrives, and they begin to discuss their differences.

Act four, Scene 3

Cassius and Brutus talk through their differences and confirm their friendship. Brutus tells Cassius that Portia has killed herself. Later, Brutus is visited in his tent by the ghost of Caesar.

Act five, Scenes 1 and 2

The opposing generals meet and argue. Cassius confesses to Messala that he now believes in ill omens, which he has seen in their march to Sardis. Cassius and Brutus agree to avoid disgrace and shame by killing themselves should they lose the battle. Brutus orders the army to rush in and attack Octavius' troops.

Act five, Scene 3

Cassius feels that his life is at its end because it is his birthday, so he will begin and end on the same day. Unsure of the state of the battle, he sends Titinius to see if the troops nearby are friend or enemy. Then he asks Pindarus to go up the hill to report how Titinius is doing. Pindarus returns and mistakenly reports that Titinius has been captured by the enemy. Cassius, despairing, commits suicide. Brutus arrives and sees that Cassius' unnecessary death is part of Caesar's revenge.

Act five, Scene 4

Pretending to be Brutus, Lucilius is captured by Antony's army. Antony respects Lucilius' loyalty and bravery.

Act five, Scene 5

Brutus wants to kill himself when he sees the battle is lost. He asks three of his soldiers in turn to hold the sword so he can run on it, but they all refuse. Finally, his servant Strato agrees. Brutus sees his death as Caesar's final revenge.

Antony, Octavius, Messala, and Lucilius arrive after the battle to find Brutus dead. Antony and Octavius promise to honor Brutus with a soldier's burial and to take Brutus' men into their services rather than count them as traitors.

Character List for *Julius Caesar*

Julius Caesar: Powerful leader and general in Rome

Calpurnia: Wife to Caesar

Marcus Brutus: Noble Roman whose forebears were noble Romans

Portia: Wife to Brutus

Caius Cassius: Prominent tribune and major instigator of the conspiracy to assassinate Caesar

Marcus Antonius (Antony): Leader of the Triumvirate and friend to Caesar

Other Conspirators

Casca

Trebonius

Caius Ligarius

Decius Brutus

Metellus Cimber

Cinna

Roman Senators

Cicero

Publius

Popilius Lena

Members of the Triumvirate with Marcus Antonius

Octavius Caesar

M. Aemilius Lepidus

Tribunes, elected officials

Flavius

Marullus

Plebeians, the commoners or working people in Rome

Cobbler

Carpenter

Messenger

Servants or officers

Claudius

Lucius

Strato

Varro

Clitus

Dardanius

Pindarus

Senators, Guards, Servants, Attendants, and so forth

Friends to Marcus Brutus and Caius Cassius

Lucilius

Messala

Titinius

Young Cato

Volumnius

Others

Cinna: the Poet

Another Poet

A *Soothsayer*: a fortune-teller

Artemidorus: a teacher

The Ghost of Caesar

Shakespeare and Stage Directions

The plays of Shakespeare are so well written that they seem to leap off the page and come to life. However, the plays themselves have very few stage directions. Perhaps this is because Shakespeare's plays were performed in large amphitheaters that were very simple.

This was a time before electric lights, so the plays needed to take place during the day to utilize the natural light. The average time for a performance was between noon and two in the afternoon. Theater historians report that there were typically no intermissions; plays ran from beginning to end without a break and took about two hours.

The set might be painted canvas to illustrate whether the play was occurring in a forest or a town, for example. Sometimes the background was accompanied by a sign that indicated the place as well. Props were few and large: a table, a chariot, gallows, a bed, or a throne.

However, the audience attending Shakespeare's plays expected a spectacle for the price of admission. Therefore, there were many devices to produce a gasp from the audience. For example, a device in the loft of the theater could raise and lower actors so that they could play gods, ghosts, or other unusual characters. Additionally, a trapdoor in the stage offered a chance for a quick appearance or disappearance. The actors could suggest a beheading or hanging with various illusions on the stage. Sound effects suggesting thunder, horses, or war were common. Music was important, and drums and horns were often played.

Most important to the sense of spectacle were the costumes worn by the actors. These were elaborate, colorful, and very expensive. Therefore, they often purchased these outfits from servants who had inherited the clothes from their masters or from hangmen, who received the clothes of their victims as payment for their services.

Though Shakespeare's stage directions are sparse, definition of a few key terms will be helpful for the reader. The following is a brief glossary of stage directions commonly found in Shakespeare's plays.

Selected Glossary of Stage Directions in Shakespeare's Plays

Above: an indication that the actor speaking from above is on a higher balcony or other scaffold that is higher than the other actors

Alarum: a stage signal, which calls the soldiers to battle; usually trumpets, drums, and shouts

Aside: words spoken by the actor so the audience overhears but the other actors on the stage do not. An aside may also be spoken to one other actor so that the others on stage do not overhear.

Calls within: a voice offstage that calls to a character on the stage

Curtains: Curtains were fabrics draped around a bed that could be opened or closed for privacy.

Draw: Actors pull their swords from their sheathes.

Enter: a direction for a character to enter the stage. This can be from the audience's right (stage right) or the audience's left (stage left).

Enter Chorus: a direction for an actor to come to the center of the stage and offer some introductory comments, usually in blank verse or rhyming couplets. In *Romeo and Juliet*, the Chorus delivers a sonnet, a form of poetry associated with love.

Exeunt: All characters leave the stage, or those characters named leave the stage.

Exit: One character leaves the stage.

Flourish: A group of trumpets or other horn instruments play a brief melody.

Have at: Characters begin to fight, usually with swords.

Pageant: a show or spectacle of actors in unusual costumes, usually without words

Prologue: an introduction spoken by the Chorus that gives an overview to the audience and invites them into the play or scene

Retires: A character slips away.

Sennet: a series of notes sounded on brass instruments to announce the approach or departure of a procession

Singing: a signal for the actor to sing the following lines as a tune

Within: voices or sounds occurring off stage but heard by the audience



Introduction to Shakespeare

A Brief Biography of William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare was born in April 1564 to John and Mary Shakespeare in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. His birthday is celebrated on April 23. This is memorable because April 23 is also the day Shakespeare died in 1616.

Shakespeare was the eldest of nine children in his family, six of whom survived to adulthood.

William Shakespeare's father worked with leather and became a successful merchant early in his career. He held some relatively important government offices. However, when William was in his early teens, his father's financial position began to slide due to growing debt. After many years, John Shakespeare's fortunes and respect were restored, but records indicate that the years of debt and lawsuits were very stressful.

Historians assume that young Will went to school and took a rigorous course of study including Latin, history, and biblical study. In 1582, at the age of eighteen, he married Anne Hathaway, who was three months pregnant. Studies of Elizabethan family life indicate that Anne's situation was not unusual since it was accepted that the engagement period was as legally binding as the marriage. The couple had a daughter, Susanna, followed by twins, Hamnet and Judith. Not much is known about Shakespeare during the next seven years, but his name is listed as an actor in London by 1592. This was a difficult time for the theater because measures to prevent the spread of the plague regularly closed the theaters.

Between 1594 and 1595, Shakespeare joined the Chamberlain's Men as a playwright and actor. The acting company featured actor Richard Burbage, and they were a favorite of Queen Elizabeth. During this time, Shakespeare was writing such plays as *Romeo and Juliet* and A *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Even though Shakespeare was enjoying great success by the time he was 32, it was dampened by the death of his son, Hamnet, in 1596. Soon after, Shakespeare refocused on his home in Stratford where he bought an estate called New Place, with gardens, orchards, and barns in addition to the main home. He still maintained a home in London near the theater.

In 1599, Shakespeare wrote *Henry V*, *Julius Caesar*, and *As You Like It*. The Globe Playhouse was up and running, with Shakespeare a 10 percent owner. This means that he was able to earn 10 percent of any show's profits. This business position helped him solidify his wealth.

In 1603, Shakespeare's reputation earned his acting troop the sponsorship of James I, who requested one play performance per month. Their name changed to the King's Men. By this time, Shakespeare had written and performed in almost all of his comedies and histories. He was proclaimed the finest playwright in London.

But Shakespeare still had what is considered his finest writing to do. He began his writing of tragedies beginning with *Hamlet* in 1600. In the following five years, Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth*, *Othello*, and *King Lear*. Why Shakespeare turned to these darker, more serious themes is widely debated by scholars. But all agree that these plays established Shakespeare's premier place in English literature.

Toward the end of 1609 through 1610, Shakespeare began to write his problem romances. These works, *The Winter's Tale*, *Cymbeline*, and *The Tempest*, are rich with mature themes of forgiveness, grace, and redemption.

After 1611, at the age of 47, Shakespeare moved back to Stratford exclusively, settling into life at New Place and enjoying a renewed relationship with his daughters, especially Susanna. He prepared a will, which has become famous for the request to leave his wife their "second best bed." Many have debated whether this is a sentimental or cynical bequest. In the same year that his daughter Judith married, 1616, Shakespeare died at the age of 52. However, it was not until 1623 that all his plays were collected into one manuscript, now referred to as the *First Folio*. The fellow King's Men players who compiled the manuscript, Heming and Condell, entitled it *Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies*.

Shakespeare's England

The age of Shakespeare was a glorious time for England. William Shakespeare's life in England was defined by the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558–1603). During her leadership, England became an important naval and economic force in Europe and beyond.

England's rise to power came when its navy defeated the Spanish Armada in 1588, when Shakespeare was about 24 years old. Queen Elizabeth was skillful in navigating through the conflicts of religion. She maintained religious independence from Rome as the Church of England became firmly rooted during her reign. Additionally, she financed the establishment of colonies in America to grow the British Empire and expand its economic opportunities. At the end of her reign, England was the leader in trade, naval power, and culture.

Because of its role as the main economic, political, and cultural center of England, London became the hub of England's prosperity and fame. If anyone wanted to become famous as a poet or dramatic writer during Shakespeare's time, he would need to be in London. In fact, London was full of great writers besides Shakespeare, such as Marlowe, Sidney, and Jonson. Yet, even as London was full of parties, trade, and amusement, it was also full of poverty, crime, and disease. Crime was a large problem, and the main jail in London was called the Clink. Disease and poor sanitation were common. In fact, twice in Shakespeare's lifetime, London endured an outbreak of the

plague, which killed thousands upon thousands of people.

Before Queen Elizabeth took the throne, London was a modestly sized city of about 60,000 people. By the time James I took the throne at her death, more than 200,000 people lived in London and its suburbs. People were attracted to London because it gave many opportunities for work and financial improvement. It was also a vibrant social scene for the upper class. In fact, one honor of being a noble was the opportunity to house Queen Elizabeth and her entire party if she was in your neighborhood. If she was a guest, it was expected that her noble hosts would cover all the expenses of housing her group. She made many "progresses" through England and London, establishing her relationships with the nobility. However, several nobles asked to be released from this honor because the expense of supporting her visit had often caused bankruptcy.

Perhaps it was better to be a flourishing member of the English merchant middle class. Their numbers and influence were rising in England at the time of Shakespeare. This was a new and an exciting development in Western European history. One major factor in the rise of the middle class was the need for wool for clothing. The expansion of the wool trade led to the formation of entire cities throughout England, and sparked progress in many other areas of commerce and trade.

With the rise of the middle class came a concern for more comfortable housing. Rather than serving simply as shelter or defense against attack, housing developed architecturally and functionally. One major improvement was the use of windows to let in light. Also, houses were built with lofts and special places for eating and sleeping, rather than having one multi-functional room. However, doors between rooms were still very rare, so that privacy in Shakespeare's time did not really exist.

Meals in Shakespeare's England were an important part of the day. Breakfast was served before dawn and was usually bread and a beverage. Therefore, everyone was really hungry for the midday meal, which could last for up to three hours. If meat was available in the home, it was usually served at this time. A smaller supper was eaten at 6:00 or 7:00 P.M., with the more wealthy people able to eat earlier, and the working class eating later. Cooking was dangerous and difficult since all meals were cooked over an open fire. Even bread was not baked in an oven but was cooked in special pans placed over the fire. A pot was almost always cooking on the fire, and the cook would put in whatever was available for supper. This is most likely where the term "potluck" came from.

Furniture was usually made of carved wood, as woodcarving was a developing craft in Shakespeare's day. One important part of an Elizabethan home was the table, or "board." One side was finished to a nice sheen, while the other side was rough. Meals were served on the rough side of the board, and then it was flipped for a more elegant look in the room. The table is where we get the terms "room and board" and having "the tables turned." Another important part of a middle- or an upper-class

home was the bed. Rather than being made of prickly straw, mattresses were now stuffed with softer feathers. Surrounded by artistically carved four posts, these beds were considered so valuable that they were often a specifically named item in a will.

Clothing in Shakespeare's time was very expensive. Of course, servants and other lower-class people wore simple garb, often a basic blue. But if a person wanted to display his wealth, his clothing was elaborate and colorful, sewn with rich velvet, lace, and gold braid. An average worker might earn seven or eight English pounds in a year, and a very nice outfit for a nobleman might cost as much as 50 or 60 pounds. In other words, if seven or eight healthy workers pooled their money for the entire year, spending nothing else, they could buy only one respectable nobleman's outfit.

Entertainment was an important part of life in Shakespeare's England. Popular sports were bear-baiting, cockfighting, and an early form of bowling. Bear-baiting, in which a dog was set loose to fight with up to three chained bears in the center of an amphitheater, and cockfighting, in which roosters pecked each other to death, were popular then, but would be absolutely unacceptable entertainment today. Bowling, however, has maintained its popularity in our current culture.

In London, a main source of entertainment was the theater. Some theaters were very large and could hold more than two thousand people. Even poor people could attend the theater since entrance cost only one penny (equivalent to 60 cents today), and they could stand around the stage. For a bit more money, a person could sit in an actual seat during the performance. However, some thought that going to the theater could be dangerous to your body or your soul. The theaters were closed twice during the plagues to reduce the spread of the disease. The Puritans disapproved of the theater as an unwholesome leisure-time activity. They also disliked the theater because the theaters were located in an area of London surrounded by brothels and bars. Nevertheless, the theater became respectable enough by 1603 to be supported by James I—and he was the monarch who directed the King James Version of the Bible to be translated.

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 1

Pleasing the Plebeians

Act one, Scene 1

Background In this scene, the commoners, or plebeians, are celebrating the defeat of Pompey, a ruler who supported the Republic. Caesar, the victor, has little respect for the Republic and favors the more personal rule of a dictator. Shakespeare has one plebeian—a shoemaker, or cobbler—representing the crowd. He is using puns to communicate with a tribune who is angry that he and other plebeians are celebrating Pompey's overthrow.

Directions **Part A**

In paragraph form, write a brief character sketch of the cobbler. Include details, such as name, age, physical characteristics, whether he has a family, and so forth. Write your paragraph below.

Part B

Imagine you are the cobbler, and write 1–2 paragraphs explaining to the tribune why you are pleased that Caesar will be the new ruler of Rome. Before you write this explanation, think about why a poor person like this cobbler would have benefited from having a strong central leader like Caesar. Write your paragraph(s) below. Use another sheet of paper, if necessary.

Student Name ______________________ Date __________



ACTIVITY 2

Cassius, the Conspirator

Act one, Scene 2

Background In this scene, Cassius tries to convince Brutus that Caesar is not fit to be the ruler of Rome, but Brutus is. Cassius is hoping that Brutus will become part of the conspiracy to overthrow Caesar.

Directions Reread Cassius' lines from line 65 to line 175 and then make two lists, one listing why Cassius thinks Brutus should be ruler, and one why Cassius thinks Caesar should not. Write your lists below.

Brutus	**Caesar**

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 3

Caesar's Spies

Act one, Scene 2

Background After Caesar parades through Rome, celebrating his victory over Pompey's sons and the Feast of Lupercal, Brutus and Cassius stay behind to talk about Caesar. Later they discuss Caesar's ambitions and weaknesses.

Directions Imagine that you are one of Caesar's spies, and you are secretly listening to Cassius and Brutus. Put their conversation from lines 53–175 into a report for Caesar, keeping in mind that he will want to know what they said, how they looked, and so forth. Write your report below.

Student Name ________________________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 4

Prodigies and Portent

Act one, Scene 3

Background When Cicero meets Casca on the streets of Rome, Casca is frightened and breathless because of all the strange and supernatural sights ("prodigies," he calls them) he has seen. Romans were very superstitious people who believed that many occurrences were signs or portents of future events. Casca interprets the prodigies as a sign that Caesar will abuse his power.

Directions Imagine that you are a reporter for the *Roman Daily Times*, and you are covering the story of all the prodigies and what they might mean for Rome. Create an interview or two with a plebeian on the street who may have had an eyewitness account of one or all of the prodigies. Be sure to get the plebeians' opinions on what they think these supernatural events mean. After writing your interview and descriptions of the prodigies, prepare a 1–2 page front-page news story about them. You will extra sheets of paper to complete your news story.

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 5
Review

Directions Read the following statements. Write the letter of the correct answer in the space provided. In 6 and 7, write true (T) or false (F) in the space provided.

___ 1. The opening scene takes place during
   a. the ides of March.
   b. the Feast of Lupercal.
   c. Pompey's triumphant return from battle.
   d. none of the above

___ 2. Marullus and Flavius are a pair of
   a. carpenters.
   b. tribunes.
   c. senators.
   d. plebeians.

___ 3. Marullus and Flavius depart to
   a. warn Caesar.
   b. visit the Capitol.
   c. destroy the decorations.
   d. attend the Feast of Lupercal.

___ 4. Marullus criticizes the mob for
   a. smelling so bad.
   b. forgetting Pompey.
   c. not paying taxes.
   d. treating him disrespectfully.

___ 5. The organizer of the conspirators is
   a. Casca.
   b. Marullus.
   c. Pompey.
   d. Cassius.

___ 6. True or false: Caesar becomes afraid when the soothsayer tells him, "Beware the ides of March."

___ 7. True or false: Caesar looks up to Cassius and considers him honorable.

___ 8. Casca tells Brutus and Cassius of
   a. Caesar's illness.
   b. Cassius' plot.
   c. Caesar's refusal of the crown.
   d. Calpurnia standing in Antony's way.

___ 9. Cassius interprets the ominous weather and strange sights as
   a. a sign that Caesar will abuse his power.
   b. a sign that spring will arrive late.
   c. a sign that Casca should make peace with Caesar.
   d. a sign that the gods are unhappy with the Romans.

___ 10. Cassius needs Brutus to join the conspiracy because
   a. Cassius is afraid to do anything without Brutus.
   b. Brutus has an excellent reputation and would make killing Caesar an honorable pursuit in the eyes of others.
   c. Brutus is rich, and Cassius needs Brutus' money to make the conspiracy a reality.
   d. none of the above

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________

ACTIVITY 6

Figures of Speech

Act two, Scene 1

Background Brutus contemplates joining the conspiracy to kill Caesar. As he does so, he thinks aloud, using two kinds of figures of speech, the *simile* and the *metaphor*.

A **simile** is a comparison using *like* or *as*.

Example: She looked as pretty as a picture in that dress.

A **metaphor** is a comparison stated without *like* or *as*.

Example: His smile was sunshine on a cloudy day.

Brutus uses an extended metaphor when he compares Caesar's rise to power to someone climbing a ladder:

"But 'tis a common proof, that lowliness is young ambition's
ladder, whereto the climber upward turns his face. . . ."

He uses a simile when he compares Caesar to a serpent's egg that must be killed before the serpent has a chance to hatch and do harm:

"And therefore think him as a serpent's egg, which hatch'd would,
as his kind, grow mischievous, and kill him in the shell."

Later, Brutus uses a simile when he describes the space between making the decision to kill Caesar and finally doing it as a hideous dream or phantasma:

"Between the acting of a dreadful thing and the first motion, all the
interim is like a phantasma, or a hideous dream. . . ."

Directions Try creating your own metaphors and similes using the following guides as starters. Write your metaphors and similes in the space provided.

1. **Simile** Being a teenager is like ______________________.
2. **Metaphor** A cold and rainy day is ______________________.
3. **Simile** Reading Shakespeare is as fun as ______________________.
4. **Metaphor** Rap music is ______________________.
5. **Simile** Playing basketball like Michael Jordan does would be like

   ______________________.

Student Name ______________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 7

Conspirator and Secretary

Act two, Scene 1

Background During this first official meeting of the conspirators at Brutus' house, Brutus wants one conspirator to take official notes because he is convinced that that their actions, words, and deeds will become the heroic matter of history.

Directions Imagine that you are the conspirator charged with recording this historic meeting. Reread lines 90 through 228 and take notes on the important decisions that were made and the information that was exchanged. Write your report below.

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 8

Passionate Portia

Act two, Scene 1

Background In this scene, Portia questions Brutus about how strangely he has been acting, and she demands to know what is bothering him despite his attempts to brush off her worries.

Directions Think about how to rewrite this scene for a modern-day audience. Rewrite the lines in modern language, speaking as we do today to make this discussion as realistic as possible. You will need to shorten the lengthy speeches and use fragments and slang to make this scene feel as though it could take place at your neighbor's house. Write your scene below. You may need to use another sheet of paper.

Student Name ______________________________ Date __________



ACTIVITY 9

Dreams, Nightmares, and Superstitions

Background The Romans were very superstitious people. Some examples of this in the play occur when Calpurnia wants Caesar to stay home after she dreams of him being killed, when Caesar requests to have priests sacrifice animals to determine whether he should leave his house, and by the characters being convinced that the prodigies were omens of what was to come.

Directions Write your answers below about dreams, nightmares, and superstitions. Write in complete sentences. Be prepared to share your answers. You may need to use another sheet of paper.

1. Do you believe that dreams can sometimes show us events that have yet to occur? Have you or anyone you know ever had such a dream? If so, describe the dream and the events following it in detail.

2. In the play, Calpurnia has a horrible and vivid nightmare about her husband's statue spouting blood, and the people gleefully washing their hands in it. Describe the most vivid nightmare you have ever had.

3. Think of two or three superstitions that you know of and write them below. (Example: It is bad luck when a black cat crosses your path, and so forth.)

4. Do you have any superstitions, such as wearing the same socks to every basketball game, that you believe in?

5. Every decade seems to be less superstitious. Why do you think this is so?

Student Name ____________________ Date __________



ACTIVITY 10
Review

Directions Match the character with the correct description. Write the letter of the correct answer in the space provided.

____	1. Cassius	a. wounds own thigh
____	2. Brutus	b. yells at the plebeians for forgetting Pompey
____	3. Calpurnia	c. tells of Caesar's refusal of the crown
____	4. Caesar	d. defeated by Caesar in a civil war
____	5. Antony	e. warns Caesar to "Beware the ides of March"
____	6. Portia	f. finds notes trying to persuade him to join the conspiracy
____	7. Casca	g. ran in a race during the Feast of Lupercal
____	8. the Soothsayer	h. cannot have children
____	9. Marullus	i. saved Caesar from drowning
____	10. Pompey	j. doesn't trust Cassius

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 11

The Death of Caesar

Act three, Scene 1

Background In this scene, to get close to Caesar, the conspirators pretend to be begging him to reconsider a punishment he had handed down. Historical documents tell us that Caesar was stabbed 23 times, producing more than enough wounds to make Calpurnia's dream a reality.

Directions Rewrite the portion of this act during which Caesar is killed (lines 1 to 77) as a screenplay for an action thriller, with the conspirators cast in evil roles. You must keep all of the conspirators, Caesar, and the soothsayer in this scene. If they speak in the original text, write a line of dialogue for them in your screenplay. You may alter what occurs during this scene, but you must conclude it with Caesar dying and Brutus being the last person to whom he speaks. Include any stage directions and/or director's notes you wish to add. Write your screenplay below. Use another sheet of paper, if necessary.

Student Name ______________________________ Date ______________



ACTIVITY 12

Antony's Exchange with the Conspirators

Act three, Scene 1

Background After Caesar is killed, Antony's servant comes to the conspirators to see if it is safe for Antony to approach. When Antony comes, he pretends to make peace with the conspirators, and he, Brutus, and Cassius have lengthy dialogue exchanges.

Directions To better understand what Antony, Brutus, and Cassius are saying and how important it is to the rest of the events in the play, summarize in your own words each speech of each character from lines 148 to 251 in two sentences or less. Do not summarize any speech less than three lines. Write your summaries below. Use another sheet of paper, if necessary.

1. Antony (lines 148–163):
2. Brutus (lines 164–176):
3. Brutus (lines 179–182):
4. Antony (lines 183–210):
5. Cassius (lines 214–217):
6. Antony (lines 218–222):
7. Brutus (lines 223–226):
8. Antony (lines 226–230):
9. Cassius (lines 230–234):
10. Brutus (lines 235–242):
11. Brutus (lines 244–251):

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 13
Revenge

Act three, Scene 1

Background Antony's demeanor after pretending to make his peace with the conspirators is much changed; in a bloody soliloquy, Antony expresses determination to avenge Caesar's death at any cost to himself and Rome.

Directions This speech has many vivid images. Choose one of the images from the speech offered below, rewrite it in modern English, and then do the following:

1. Explain why you chose this particular image.
2. Draw the image as you picture it.

Option A: "O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth, that I am meek and gentle with these butchers!"

Option B: "Over thy wounds now do I prophesy (which like dumb mouths do ope their ruby lips to beg the voice an utterance of my tongue)"

Option C: "And Caesar's spirit, ranging for revenge, with Até by his side come hot from hell shall in these confines with a monarch's voice cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war."

You will need to use another sheet of paper to rewrite the speech, write an explanation, and draw the image.

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 14

What the Servant Said

Act three, Scene 1

Background After Antony's revenge speech, Octavius' servant comes and reports that his master is nearby. Octavius was a distant relative of Caesar's, but he loved Caesar and was thought of as a son by Caesar. Antony tells the servant what has happened and instructs him to tell Octavius the same.

Directions Imagine that you are Octavius' servant. In a paragraph or two, retell your master what has happened in Rome. Try to do it in Shakespearean language, using words you have come to know from reading this and any other of Shakespeare's plays. Write your paragraphs below.

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 15
Review

Directions Read each statement below and decide if it is true or false. Then write true (T) or false (F) in the space provided.

____ 1. People besides the conspirators knew of the plan to kill Caesar.

____ 2. The soothsayer hands Caesar a piece of paper with the conspirators' names on it.

____ 3. Casca is the first to stab Caesar.

____ 4. Caesar dies on March 30.

____ 5. Calpurnia's dream about people bathing in Caesar's blood becomes a reality.

____ 6. Antony barges in angrily to accuse the conspirators of treason.

____ 7. Cassius is the conspirator who decides that Antony will speak at Caesar's funeral.

____ 8. Antony pretends to like the conspirators so that he can avenge Caesar's death later.

____ 9. Antony asks if he can bring Caesar's body to the pulpit.

____ 10. Octavius Caesar comes to Antony, but Antony tells him that he needs to leave Rome because it is too dangerous.

Student Name ______________________________ Date ______________



ACTIVITY 16

Cassius' Speech

Act three, Scene 2

Background While Brutus speaks to the crowd, convincing them that Caesar deserved to die, Shakespeare indicates that Cassius is at another public pulpit doing the same thing (see lines 2 to 8).

Directions In the space below, write Cassius' speech to the plebeians explaining why the conspirators are heroes rather than traitors and why Caesar deserved to die. Reread Cassius' speech to Brutus in Act one in which he discusses why Caesar is unfit to be a ruler, and in which he attempts to persuade Brutus to join the conspiracy. Looking at these speeches again will help you to get an idea of how Cassius thinks and speaks.

Student Name ______________________ Date __________

ACTIVITY 17

Comparing Speeches

Act three, Scene 2

Background Antony quite skillfully goes about disproving everything Brutus says about Caesar in his speech to the plebeians.

Directions In order to better understand what Brutus and Antony say about Caesar, fill in the following outline with information from their speeches.Write your answers in the space provided.

What Brutus Says

1. Brutus says that he did not kill Caesar because he didn't care for him, but he killed Caesar because he (Brutus) loved ______________________ .
2. Brutus says that if Caesar were still alive, all of the people would die ______________________.
3. Brutus says he was forced to kill Caesar because Caesar was ______________________.
4. Finally, Brutus claims that he killed Caesar for the good of ______________________.

What Antony Says

5. In answer to Brutus' claim that Caesar was ambitious, Antony says that Caesar brought many ______________________ home to Rome, whose ______________________ did the general coffers fill.
6. On a more emotional note, Antony claims that Caesar wept when ______________________.
7. Antony also proves that Caesar was not ambitious because Antony thrice presented him ______________________ that Caesar refused.
8. Finally, Caesar allegedly left the people in his will ______________________ and ______________________.

Student Name ______________________________ Date ______________



ACTIVITY 18
Writing Caesar's Obituary

Act three, Scene 2

Background A *eulogy* is a speech someone gives at a funeral for a person who has died. In this speech, the person giving the eulogy normally tries to share what was best about the deceased. When Antony gives Caesar's eulogy, he shares what he feels were Caesar's best traits in order to remember him. But Antony also wants to stir the plebeians to help him avenge his friend's death.

Directions Imagine that you are a newspaper reporter for the *Roman Daily Times*. You have heard Antony's eulogy and you, like many of the plebeians, are swayed to believe that Caesar was wrongfully murdered. It is your job to write Julius Caesar's obituary (a public notice of someone's death), which will appear in tomorrow's newspaper. What you write may sway others' opinion of the assassination (if it was just or not), so take into account all you know about Caesar thus far. If possible, look through the obituaries in your local newspaper to use as a sample. Write Caesar's obituary below.

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 19

Great Orators and the Mob Mentality Act three, Scene 2

Background Antony gives an excellent speech. He is clever and persuasive, and he plays with the mob's emotions in order to whip them into a frenzy of rage. Throughout history, it is great orators (speakers) who are able to grab a crowd's attention and make them passionate about their cause, good or bad. This "mob mentality"—many people thinking the same thing at the same time—can be powerfully productive or destructive.

Directions Using Antony's speech as an example of an effective speech, choose an issue in your school or world with which you don't agree. Think of what you would do to change this issue if you could. Then write a speech to the group of people most affected by this issue. (For instance, if you are writing about the quality of school lunches, students, teachers, and cooks may be your primary audience.) Write your speech below.

Student Name ______________________________ Date __________



ACTIVITY 20

Review

Directions Answer the following questions. Write the letter of the correct answer in the space provided.

___ 1. Who speaks to the crowd first, Brutus or Antony?

a. Brutus
b. Antony

___ 2. How does Antony repeatedly refer to Brutus and the conspirators during his speech?

a. faithful men
b. honorable men
c. cold-blooded killers
d. deliverers of freedom

___ 3. What is the basic reason Brutus gives to the plebeians for Caesar's death?

a. Caesar was an unfit ruler.
b. Caesar wanted to be king.
c. Caesar was ambitious.
d. Caesar was weak.

___ 4. Who says "Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears. . ."?

a. Brutus
b. Antony

___ 5. What is one proof Antony gives to the crowd that Caesar was not as Brutus portrayed him?

a. Caesar gave money to charity.
b. Caesar loved the Romans.
c. Caesar refused the crown.
d. Caesar cared for small animals.

___ 6. What does Antony do to stir up the crowd to avenge Caesar's death?

a. shows Caesar's body
b. sings Caesar's favorite song
c. reads a letter Caesar had written to the plebeians
d. has Calpurnia speak

___ 7. Which of the following did Caesar leave to the plebeians in his will?

a. a theatre
b. money
c. his house
d. the senate house

___ 8. What do Brutus and Cassius do when they find out how Antony has stirred the people against them?

a. leave Rome
b. seek out Antony
c. hold a meeting of all the conspirators
d. commit suicide

___ 9. After his speech to the plebeians, who does Antony go to meet with?

a. Octavius c. Calpurnia
b. Brutus d. Marullus

___ 10. Who gets mistaken for a conspirator at the end of this act?

a. Portia c. Antony
b. the Soothsayer d. Cinna the poet

Student Name ______________________ Date __________



ACTIVITY 21

Power and Corruption

Act four, Scene 1

Background The three leaders who make up the Second Triumvirate—Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus—meet to plan their revenge.

Directions Historian Lord Acton wrote, "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely." First, explain this quotation in your own words as you understand it. Then describe why and how this quotation fits or doesn't fit the major characters in the play. Use the characters' actions and words thus far to support why or why not the quotation suits the character. Write your answers below.

Quotation explanation:

Caesar:

Brutus:

Cassius:

Antony:

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 22

The Commanders Squabble

Act four, Scene 3

Background Cassius and Brutus meet to discuss their differences and confirm their friendship. They decide never to fight again and seal their friendship with a drink.

Directions You are a soldier, guarding the tent in which your commanders, Marcus Brutus and Caius Cassius, are arguing. The troops have heard Cassius telling Brutus that Brutus had wronged him (Cassius), and they want to know why the two leaders were arguing. In the space below, write what you will tell the troops later, including how the two ended up being friends again.

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 23

A Wife's Suicide Letter

Act four, Scene 3

Background After they quarrel, Brutus reveals to Cassius that part of the reason he became so angry so quickly was due to his grief over Portia's death. He tells Cassius that Portia put hot coals in her mouth and choked to death.

Directions Brutus tells Cassius that Portia killed herself because she was so worried about the alliance between Antony and Octavius and because she missed Brutus so much. This seems like an incomplete explanation, especially considering that the way she chose to end her life was a particularly unpleasant one. In the space below, write Portia's suicide letter to Brutus, explaining why she felt the need to take her life and why she chose to end it in the way she did.

Student Name ______________________________ Date __________



ACTIVITY 24

What Brutus Says, Goes

Background Throughout the play, whenever Brutus and Cassius have had differing opinions, Brutus always gets his way. This holds true again in Act four, Scene 3, when Brutus and Cassius talk of marching to Philippi or waiting to let the enemy come to them.

Directions Look back at the following scenes and summarize the disagreement between Brutus and Cassius, being sure to explain each man's view of the issue. Write your answers below.

1. Act two, Scene 1 (approximately lines 113–140):

2. Act two, Scene 1 (starting approximately at line 155):

3. Act three, Scene 1 (starting approximately at line 230):

4. Act four, Scene 3 (starting approximately at line 195):

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 25

Review

Directions Match the following quotations from the play with the character who said it. One letter will be used twice. Write the letter of the correct answer in the space provided.

a. Antony	d. Caesar	g. Marullus
b. Cassius	e. Casca	h. the Soothsayer
c. Brutus	f. Portia	i. Calpurnia

____ 1. "You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!"

____ 2. "Cowards die many times before their deaths; the valiant never taste of death but once."

____ 3. "Beware the ides of March."

____ 4. "And therefore think him as a serpent's egg . . . and kill him in the shell."

____ 5. "When beggars die, there are no comets seen; the heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes."

____ 6. "Ay me, how weak a thing the heart of a woman is!"

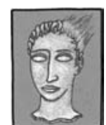
____ 7. "But I am constant as the northern star. . . ."

____ 8. "Speaking for myself, it was Greek to me."

____ 9. "Do not presume too much upon my love. I may do that I shall be sorry for."

____ 10. "This is a slight unmeritable man, meet to be sent on errands."

Student Name ______________________________ Date ______________



ACTIVITY 26

Cassius' Diary

Act five, Scene 1

Background Cassius feels that his life is near its end because it is his birthday; he thinks he will likely begin and end his life on the same day. He later dies.

Directions Reread lines 73 to 123, and then write a journal entry as if you were Cassius. Write how he is feeling on this, the eve of battle—his fears, his hopes, his thoughts on suicide (he discusses this with Brutus), and what he thinks of his potentially final farewell to Brutus. Write your journal entry below.

Student Name ______________________________ Date ______________



ACTIVITY 27

The Mistake

Act five, Scene 3

Background Unsure of the state of the battle, Cassius asks Pindarus to report on it. Pindarus tells him Titinius has been captured. Cassius, in despair, has Pindarus run him through with a sword.

Directions Imagine that you are Pindarus, explaining to Brutus about the tragic confusion that led to Cassius' death. Give him a clear account as well as a diagram or picture of what happened. Write your account and draw your diagram or picture below.

Account

Diagram or Picture

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 28

The Second Visitation

Act five, Scene 5

Background In this scene, Brutus is sure that it is his time to die, and he mentions that one of the omens that convinces him of this is that he has seen the ghost of Caesar twice. Shakespeare chose to show us only the first visit at Sardis in Act four, Scene 3.

Directions You have been asked to write the second visit of the ghost. The only two characters who will talk are the ghost of Caesar and Brutus. In the space below, write this scene in play format. Think about what more Caesar might have to say to Brutus the night before the great battle at Philippi, and what Brutus might have to say to or ask of the ghost.

Student Name ______________________________ Date ______________



ACTIVITY 29

A Report from the Battlefield

Act five

Background Octavius and Cassius have won the battle at Philippi.

Directions You are a reporter for a newspaper back in Rome reporting what has happened here at Philippi. Include the most important facts about who has died and how they died, how the victors will treat any captives, and so forth. Include as many details as necessary in order to give a complete picture of what has occurred. Write your news story below. Remember the keys to any good newspaper reporting: who, what, when, where, why, and how.

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



ACTIVITY 30
Review

Directions Number the following events from the play to match the order in which they occurred, 1 being first and 10 being last. Write each number in the space provided.

1. ____ Brutus finds notes encouraging him to join the conspiracy.

2. ____ Cassius walks bare-chested in the midst of a strange storm.

3. ____ Casca tells Brutus and Cassius about Caesar refusing the crown.

4. ____ Calpurnia has a nightmare about Caesar dying.

5. ____ Portia swallows coal.

6. ____ Cassius and Brutus argue, and Cassius melodramatically takes his dagger out.

7. ____ Brutus sees the ghost of Caesar.

8. ____ Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus decide who will live and who will die.

9. ____ A soothsayer warns Caesar to "Beware the ides of March."

10. ____ A tribune yells at the plebeians for forgetting Pompey.

Student Name ______________________________ Date __________



Julius Caesar

Final Test

Directions: Read each statement. Then write true (T) or false (F) in the space provided.

___ 1. The Feast of Lupercal is on March 15.

___ 2. The Soothsayer warns that Portia will kill herself.

___ 3. Flavius and Marullus are loyal to Caesar.

___ 4. Portia does not accept Brutus' silence when she questions him about his troubles.

___ 5. Cassius told the story about Caesar refusing the crown three times.

___ 6. Brutus dies on his birthday.

___ 7. The play takes place in Verona, Italy.

___ 8. Generally, the plebeians liked Caesar.

___ 9. Brutus' basic reasoning to the crowd about why Caesar deserved death was that Caesar was ambitious.

___ 10. Antony speaks to the crowd first, Brutus second.

Directions: Choose the letter of the best answer. Write it in the space provided.

___ 11. What tactic did Cassius use to win Brutus to the conspiracy?
- a. threats
- b. flattery
- c. deceit
- d. promise of wealth

___ 12. What were the prodigies?
- a. strange supernatural events
- b. young senators favored by Caesar
- c. nightmares
- d. diseases like the Black Plague

___ 13. Who tries to warn Caesar with a note containing the conspirators' names?
- a. Popilius Lena
- b. the Soothsayer
- c. Antony
- d. Artemidorus

___ 14. Who stabs Caesar first?
- a. Brutus
- b. Casca
- c. Cassius
- d. Decius

(continued)

___ 15. What mistake leads to Cassius' death?

a. He thinks that he sees Titinius captured.
b. He believes Brutus to be dead.
c. He thinks he sees his men retreating.
d. His men disobeyed his orders.

___ 16. What bad omen occurs in Brutus' tent the night before the battle?

a. Vultures circle the tents.
b. Caesar's ghost appears.
c. A soothsayer predicts that they will lose.
d. There is a bad storm.

___ 17. Pindarus holds the sword for whom?

a. Brutus
b. Cassius
c. Antony
d. himself

___ 18. Which man pretends to be Brutus on the battlefield?

a. Pindarus
b. Cato
c. Lucilius
d. Lucius

___ 19. How do Octavius and Antony show their good will and nobility?

a. They allow Brutus to be buried honorably and take his servants into service.
b. They give the money stated in Caesar's will to the plebeians.
c. They rule wisely after the war.
d. They build statues of themselves in Rome.

___ 20. Why does Antony honor Brutus after he is dead?

a. He says that Brutus killed Caesar only because he sincerely thought Caesar would harm Rome.
b. It is bad luck to dishonor the dead.
c. Antony had always feared Brutus in life.
d. Brutus died so valiantly on the battlefield.

Student Name ______________________________ Date __________



CULMINATING ACTIVITY 1

Punning for Fun

Directions Shakespeare was a master of puns, always keeping the Elizabethans laughing with his plays on words. Alone or with a partner, find *one quotation* within the play that can be made into a pun or humorously interpreted literally. Then illustrate it! You will need to use poster board or another sheet of paper for this project.

Examples

Pun: When Brutus says to Cassius, "O Cassius, you are choked with a ham." The accompanying picture might show a great festival with food and drink, and Cassius choking on something.

Literal Interpretation: The actual quotation, "O Cassius, you are yoked with a lamb," could be humorously interpreted literally with a picture depicting Cassius and a lamb yoked together.

Guidelines

1. You must have the act, scene, and line number where you found the original phrase or line.

2. You must explain the correct meaning of the line somewhere on your project.

3. Illustrations must be clear and neat and must demonstrate effort. They may be drawn or pieced together with clippings from magazines, newspapers, and so forth.

4. Puns, literal interpretations, and illustrations must show good taste.

Student Name ____________________ Date __________



CULMINATING ACTIVITY 2

Caesar and Current Events

Directions

1. Team up with other classmates to form seven groups. Each group will review the quotations assigned to it, as set out below. Each group is to identify the speaker, audience, situation, and overall importance of each quotation.
2. Next, after discussing the meanings of the quotations your group has been given, choose one of the quotations and select a contemporary event (occurring in the last five years) to which the quotation can be applied.
3. On poster board, write out the quotation, act, and scene clearly. Then, represent the current event that you have chosen to accompany your quotation by using drawings, pictures from magazines, or a combination of the two. There is really no limit as to what you can do to represent your event and how that event fits in with the current event.

Examples

- "Beware the ides of March."

The illustration shows pictures of computers blowing up, people hoarding food, the Dow Jones Index plummeting, and banks closing. The accompanying text is "Beware Y2K!"

- "Their shadows seem a canopy most fatal."

The illustration is cut in half: the left half shows the shadow of planes on the side of the World Trade Center, and the right half shows the remains of the great building after it was bombed. The accompanying text is "9/11: We won't forget you."

Quotations **Group 1**

1. "No, Cassius, for the eye sees not itself but by reflection, by some other thing." Act one, Scene 2, Brutus to Cassius
2. "It doth amaze me, a man of such a feeble temper should so get the start of the majestic world, and bear the palm alone." Act one, Scene 2, Cassius to Brutus

(continued)



CULMINATING ACTIVITY 2

Caesar and Current Events (*continued*)

Group 2

1. "Men at some times are masters of their fates. . . ." Act one, Scene 2, Cassius to Brutus
2. "Indeed, it is a strange-disposed time: But men may construe things, after their fashion, clean from the purpose of the things themselves." Act one, Scene 3, Cicero to Casca

Group 3

1. "But 'tis a common proof that lowliness is young ambition's ladder, whereto the climber upward turns his face; but when he once attains the upmost round, he then unto the ladder turns his back, looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees by which he did ascend." Act two, Scene 1, Brutus to himself
2. "And therefore think him as a serpent's egg, which hatch'd, would, as his kind, grow mischievous, and kill him in the shell." Act two, Scene 1, Brutus to himself

Group 4

1. "Between the acting of a dreadful thing and the first motion, all the interim is like a phantasma, or a hideous dream." Act two, Scene 1, Brutus to himself
2. "For Antony is but a limb of Caesar." Act two, Scene 1, Brutus to Cassius

Group 5

1. "We all stand up against the spirit of Caesar." Act two, Scene 1, Brutus to conspirators
2. "When beggars die, there are no comets seen; the heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes." Act two, Scene 2, Calpurnia to Caesar

(*continued*)



CULMINATING ACTIVITY 2

Caesar and Current Events (continued)

Group 6

1. "Cowards die many times before their deaths; the valiant never taste of death but once." Act two, Scene 2, Caesar to Calpurnia
2. "But I am constant as the northern star." Act three, Scene 1, Caesar to Cassius and Cinna

Group 7

1. "For we are at the stake, and bay'd about with many enemies; and some that smile have in their hearts, I fear, millions of mischiefs." Act four, Scene 1, Octavius to Antony
2. "His life was gentle, and the elements so mix'd in him that Nature might stand up and say to all the world, 'This was a man!'" Act five, Scene 5, Antony to Messala and Octavius

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



CULMINATING ACTIVITY 3

Political Unrest in Caesar's Day and Ours

Directions Write a research paper comparing Caesar's assassination to another political overthrow or assassination that has occurred in the last 10 years. For your paper you will need to research the event you choose to compare to the conspiracy's overthrow of Julius Caesar. Through your research, you will better understand the similarities and differences between the two.

Guidelines

1. The length of your research paper should be three to five typed double-spaced pages.
2. Consider researching political unrest in other countries.
3. You must use at least three quotations from the play that illustrate a similarity between the two events you are comparing.
4. Consider not only the events/reasons leading to the assassination or overthrow, but also focus on the events afterward.
5. As you research, try to find information on your event from at least three different sources (example: newspaper account, Internet, magazine). You must document your sources in a bibliography at the end of your paper.

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



CULMINATING ACTIVITY 4

Caesar in Space?

Directions What would happen if Antony delivered his famous speech on the steps of the White House as the impeachment hearings against former President Bill Clinton were going on inside? Or if Brutus contemplated his role in the conspiracy in the World Trade Center on September 11? Or if Caesar flew to the Senate House on the ides of March in a space craft? Your job is to re-create a scene from *Julius Caesar* and place it in a different place and time. You may work in a group with other classmates.

1. First, select a time period with an environment and dialect that appeal to you. No two groups may have the same dialect, era, or premise.
2. The chosen period may come from the past, present, or future. Examples: Civil War South, the 1960s, the Harlem Renaissance, the 1990s, Rome in the year 3000
3. As you are brainstorming, remember novels and stories you have read that incorporate the flavor and dialect of a certain period, and try to do the same with the scene you are re-creating.
4. Detail the staging, setting, and costuming of the scene, in addition to translating the text into the correct dialect for the period. Your adaptations should be prepared in proper dramatic format (use *Julius Caesar* as a guide for how a play, setting, and so forth should be written and arranged on a page). These should be typed and double-spaced. Everyone in the group needs a copy.
5. These adaptations may then be acted out in front of the class, if time allows. Give one copy to your teacher.

Student Name ______________________________ Date ____________



CULMINATING ACTIVITY 5

Cast the Play

Directions Imagine that you are a high-powered casting director who is about to cast all the starring roles for an upcoming remake of *Julius Caesar*. You have all the connections and resources necessary to hire any and all actors you wish. Write not only the name of the actor you would choose for each role, but also an explanation of why you would choose that actor for that role.

Julius Caesar

Actor:

Explanation:

Marcus Brutus

Actor:

Explanation:

Caius Cassius

Actor:

Explanation:

Portia

Actor:

Explanation:

(continued)

Student Name ________________________ Date __________

CULMINATING ACTIVITY 5

Cast the Play *(continued)*

Calpurnia

Actor:

Explanation:

Antony

Actor:

Explanation:

Octavius

Actor:

Explanation:

the Soothsayer

Actor:

Explanation:

Casca

Actor:

Explanation:

Activity 1

Part A: Answers will vary.

Part B: Answers will vary. The plebeians may have preferred Caesar because he was less interested in the rich men who made up the Senate and more interested in the needs of the Roman people.

Activity 2

Answers will vary, but Cassius believes that Caesar does not deserve to rule because he is weak (Cassius saved him from drowning, and Caesar has epileptic seizures) and tyrannical (Cassius compares him to a giant, and all Romans have to tiptoe around him and act reverential by bowing constantly whenever Caesar wishes it). Cassius is convinced Caesar really does want to be king (so he's ambitious in ways that will lead to Romans becoming slaves). Cassius tells Brutus that Brutus is nobler than Caesar and Brutus wouldn't be a tyrant, so he deserves to rule Rome and not Caesar.

Activity 3

Answers will vary slightly, but all should include that Cassius accuses Caesar of becoming a tyrant, abusing his power, and being a weak and worthless ruler. Also, Cassius tries to convince Brutus that Brutus should rule, and Brutus is willing to listen. Brutus leaves saying he'll think more about what Cassius said.

Activity 4

Answers will vary, but the prodigies are as follows:

- Storm (tempest) dropping fire from the sky
- Slave whose hand was on fire but remained unscorched
- A lion walking around the Capitol
- Men engulfed with fire walking around
- An owl shrieking in the daylight

Activity 5

1. b
2. b
3. c
4. b
5. d
6. F
7. F
8. c
9. a
10. b

Activity 6

Answers will vary.

Activity 7

Answers will vary, but the following information should be present in some form: Cassius, Casca, Decius, Cinna, Metellus Cimber, Trebonius, and Marcus Brutus are in attendance. Cassius wants the conspirators to swear an oath of loyalty to the conspiracy, but Brutus says that, as Romans, they shouldn't need an oath to be noble. Brutus doesn't want Cicero as a member of the conspiracy. Cassius thinks that Antony should die with Caesar, but Brutus says they will seem too bloody; besides, Antony has no power without Caesar anyway. Brutus says they should murder Caesar respectfully. Cassius is worried that Caesar won't leave his house to go to the Capitol because he has been superstitious lately, but Decius says he will take care of it. They agree that Caius Ligarius will be approached to join the conspiracy, and Brutus

tells all the conspirators to look happy so as not to betray what they are about to do.

Activity 8

Answers will vary, but an example follows.

Portia: Brutus, why are you up?

Brutus: Why in the world are you awake? It's way too cold for you to be up right now.

Portia: Take your own advice! What's up with you lately, anyway? You haven't been sleeping, and when I ask you what's wrong, you brush me off. Something is going on, and you are so strange lately, I barely know you. Please let me know what's wrong.

Activity 9

Answers will vary. A possible answer to 5 is that because we are more technologically advanced in every age, there is less room for superstition.

Activity 10

1. i	6. a
2. f	7. c
3. h	8. e
4. j	9. b
5. g	10. d

Activity 11

Answers will vary.

Activity 12

Answers may vary slightly.

1. Antony: Poor Caesar! What a horrible sight! Gentleman, kill me now right here by Caesar if you intend to, for no place would be better than by my dead friend.
2. Brutus: Antony, please don't beg your death from us. I know we must seem like bloody traitors to you now, but we did what we did for the good of Rome, and you will go unharmed after we explain it to you.
3. Brutus: Be patient, Antony; we will explain to the plebeians why we killed Caesar, and then we will explain it to you.
4. Antony: I know that your reasons must have been honorable, and let me shake your hands to prove it. Oh Caesar! It must grieve you to see me shaking hands with your murderers—poor Caesar!
5. Cassius: I don't blame you for praising Caesar, but are you with us or not?
6. Antony: I shook your hands because I am with you, but I am hoping for reasons why Caesar deserved to die.
7. Brutus: Our reasons are so good, that you would agree Caesar needed to die even if you were his son.
8. Antony: Also, I would like to take Caesar's body to the pulpit and speak at his funeral.
9. Cassius: Don't let him do it! The people will be swayed by him to think we murdered Caesar wrongly!
10. Brutus: Don't worry; I'll speak first and show the people why Caesar needed to be killed, and I'll tell the people that Antony speaks with our permission. It will help us in the long run.
11. Brutus: Mark Antony, take the body and speak at his funeral, but do not blame us. Rather, speak well of Caesar and say you do it with our permission.

Activity 13

Answers and images will vary.

A: Please forgive me, Caesar, for being nice to your murderers!

B: Over your wounds I prophesy, which like mouths open their lips and beg for me to speak for them.

C: And Caesar's ghost will come from hell, looking for revenge and cry for chaos and war to break loose.

Activity 14

Answers will vary.

Oh, Octavius, my lord, Caesar hath been slain! The murderers stabbed him and then washed their hands in the blood streaming forth from his corse! Marcus Brutus and Caius Cassius hath been the leaders of this bloody deed. Master Antony went forth after Caesar's death to pray his death from them, but they begged him to join them. Antony feigned allegiance to them so as to seek revenge for the slain Caesar, and asked if he might speak at his funeral. Brutus agreed but said he would speak first, rendering reasons why Caesar must die. Antony says that this is a dangerous Rome, and you are to wait for his word before you chance a visit there.

Activity 15

1. T
2. F
3. T
4. F
5. T
6. F
7. F
8. T
9. T
10. F

Activity 16

Answers will vary.

Activity 17

Answers may vary slightly.

1. Rome more
2. slaves
3. a tyrant
4. Rome
5. captives/ransoms
6. the poor cried
7. the crown
8. money and his walks/gardens

Activity 18

Answers will vary, but should include some of the facts brought forth about Caesar in the play (defeated Pompey, stabbed to death, believed in a more personal rule as opposed to being loyal to the Republic, wife was Calpurnia, and so forth).

Activity 19

Answers will vary.

Activity 20

1. a
2. b
3. c
4. b
5. c
6. a
7. b
8. a
9. a
10. d

Activity 21

Answers will vary, but you may want to point out that, at various stages of the play, all of the characters could be seen as "corrupted" in some way.

Activity 22

Answers will vary, but the following should be present in the retelling in some form.

Cassius is mad at Brutus for condemning a friend of his for taking a bribe. Brutus tells Cassius that Cassius was wrong to stand up for a thief like that. Brutus tells Cassius that he is mad at him because Cassius denied him money when he (Brutus) requested it to pay the troops. Cassius denies saying no, but Brutus doesn't believe him. They trade insults, and Cassius threatens Brutus. Brutus essentially calls Cassius a fool. Cassius takes out his dagger and melodramatically tells Brutus that Brutus may as well kill him if he hates him so much. This softens Brutus, and the two reconcile, vowing to never fight like that again and sealing it with a drink.

Activity 23

Answers will vary.

Activity 24

1. Act two, Scene 1: Cassius wants the conspirators to swear an oath, and Brutus says they shouldn't because noble Romans shouldn't need to take oaths.
2. Act two, Scene 1: Cassius thinks that Antony should be killed along with Caesar; Brutus says that the conspirators' cause will seem too bloody, and Antony has no power without Caesar. Brutus says Antony should live.
3. Act three, Scene 1: Cassius doesn't think Antony should be allowed to speak at Caesar's funeral; Brutus disagrees and says it will make the conspirators look good, and besides, he (Brutus) will speak to the commoners first.
4. Act four, Scene 3: Cassius thinks that their army should stay right where they are and let the enemy come to them. Brutus thinks that they should march to Philippi to meet the enemy because the other side could gain more men, seeing that they are grudgingly accepting Brutus' troops. Also, Brutus thinks that their army and cause is at its peak, so they need to seize the day.

Activity 25

1. g
2. d
3. h
4. c
5. i
6. f
7. d
8. e
9. b
10. a

Activity 26

Answers will vary.

Activity 27

Cassius is on the battlefield at the bottom of a hill. He sees or hears troops in the distance and

asks Titinius to go see if the troops are friend or enemy. Titinius goes, and Cassius then asks Pindarus to climb up on the hill to observe Titinius checking out the troops. Pindarus does so, sees Titinius captured, and hears the troops shouting for joy. Cassius, hearing this, is convinced that all is lost and asks Pindarus to run him (Cassius) through with the sword, which Pindarus does. Titinius returns, lamenting that Cassius misunderstood what had happened. The troops that Pindarus saw were friendly, and Titinius dismounted to receive a wreath of victory to take back to Cassius. Out of grief over the misunderstanding that led to Cassius' death, Titinius kills himself as well after placing a wreath on Cassius' body.

Activity 28

Answers will vary, but most likely, the ghost is sharing bad news about what is in Brutus' future.

Activity 29

Answers will vary, but reports should include the following:

- Caius Cassius is dead; he had his servant, Pindarus, run him through with his sword.
- Brutus is dead, and he died by having Strato hold the sword.
- Octavius and Cassius have won the war at Philippi, and Octavius will take on all servants of Brutus.
- Brutus will have a proper military funeral; according to Antony, Brutus was the only conspirator who killed Caesar because he believed it was for the good of Rome (as opposed to doing it for personal gain).

Activity 30

1. 5
2. 4
3. 3
4. 6
5. 9
6. 8
7. 10
8. 7
9. 2
10. 1

Final Test

1. F
2. F
3. F
4. T
5. F
6. F
7. F
8. T
9. T
10. F
11. b
12. a
13. d
14. b
15. a
16. a
17. b
18. c
19. a
20. a

Culminating Activity 1

Answers will vary, but you may want to have students tell you what they choose to pun or take literally so that students don't do duplicate pictures/images.

Culminating Activity 2

Answers will vary; see examples for guidelines.

Culminating Activity 3

Reports will vary.

Culminating Activity 4

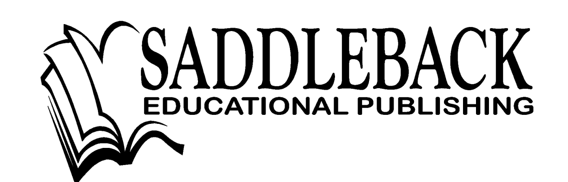
Answers will vary, but you may want to consider the following guidelines when grading.

- Smooth presentation style
- Dialect, events, and props are appropriate for the chosen era

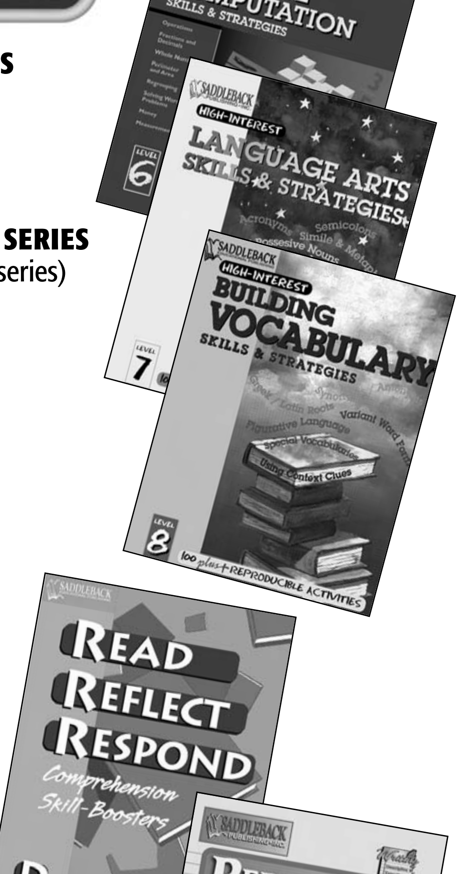
- Typed script given to teacher
- Lines were appropriately translated and paraphrased (didn't misinterpret play)
- Covered the main events of the scene
- Complete script (including staging, setting, costuming, and dialect)
- Enthusiastic performance

Culminating Activity 5

Answers will vary.



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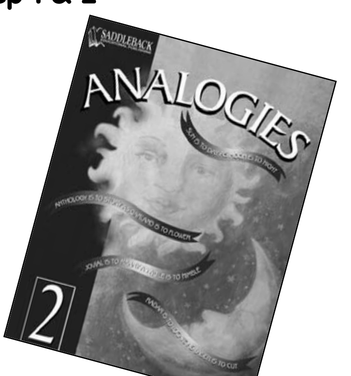
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